



2020 – 2021 Continuing Approval Review Report Region 18 Education Service Center (ESC)

PURPOSE

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Program Specialist, Angela Von Hatten, conducted a five-year Continuing Approval Desk Review of the educator preparation program (EPP) on December 7, 2020. Per 19 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §228.10(b), "...An entity approved by the SBEC under this chapter shall be reviewed at least once every five years...". Dr. Dewitt Smith was identified as the program's Legal Authority. Dr. Autumn Sloan was identified as the primary contact for the review process. Region 18 ESC was approved as an EPP on March 1, 1989. At the time of the review, the EPP was rated Accredited-Warning (Year One). The risk level was Stage 2 (medium). The EPP reported 53 finishers for the 2018-2019 reporting year and 21 finishers for 2019-2020.

At the time of the review, the Region 18 ESC was approved to certify candidates in the Superintendent class in the alternative certification program (ACP) route. As of 8/31/2020, Region 18 ESC no longer offers teacher and principal certification.

Per 19 TAC §228.1(c), "all educator preparation programs are subject to the same standards of accountability, as required under Chapter 229 of this title." The TEA administers TAC required by the Texas legislature for the regulation of all EPPs in the state. (See the complete [TAC](#) for details.) The five-year Continuing Approval Review was conducted in a "Desk Review" format where EPP staff submitted requested documents to TEA for review.

The scope of this review included: 1) verifying compliance with Texas Administrative Code and Texas Education Code as applicable to all certification classes in all certification routes offered by the EPP; and 2) developing a plan for improvement based on review data, performance indicators identified in 19 TAC §229.4, and self-reported EPP information provided in the Status Report. Next steps were developed to address plans for quality improvement. Evidence of compliance was measured using a rubric aligned to TAC.

Dr. Autumn Sloan participated in the review at various stages such as the mid-review phone conference.

DATA ANALYSIS

Information concerning compliance with TAC governing EPPs was collected by a variety of means. A Status Report and related program documents were submitted to TEA on November 23, 2020. Additional EPP documents, including records for ten (10) candidates, were submitted on December 7, 2020. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies of content analysis, cross-referencing, and triangulation of the data were used to evaluate the evidence.



FINDINGS, COMPLIANCE ISSUES, and RECOMMENDATIONS

“Findings” indicate evidence collected during the review process. If the program is “not in compliance” with any identified component, the program should consult the TAC and correct the issue immediately. A “Compliance Plan” or “Next Steps” may be drafted during the review that identifies compliance issues to be addressed and a timeline for completion.

“Recommendations” are suggestions for general program improvement and no follow-up is required.

COMPONENT I: GOVERNANCE – 19 TAC Chapter 228

Findings

- TEA did not review Governance documents but relied on self-reported information contained within the Status Report to determine compliance.
- It was reported that advisory committee membership, input provided by members, members, member training, and meeting frequency met requirements. [19 TAC §228.20(b)]
- The governing body has provided sufficient support and resources to Region 18 ESC's program. The legal authority's participation in all aspects of the review served as evidence of compliance. [19 TAC §228.20(c)]
- Region 18 ESC has a published calendar of activities for the Superintendent program. Evidence in the form of a program flyer was found on the website. [19 TAC §228.20(g)]
- Region 18 ESC submitted the Status Report for the EPP Review on November 23, 2020, as required. [19 TAC §228.10(b)(1)]
- Region 18 ESC has met the requirements to offer clinical teaching. The program was approved to offer clinical teaching on May 18, 2006. The application is on file with TEA. [19 TAC §228.10(c)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed

- None

Recommendations

- TEA recommends EPP staff subscribe to the EPP weekly newsletter.

Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC was in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 228 – Governance of Educator Preparation Programs.

COMPONENT II: ADMISSION - 19 TAC Chapter 227

Findings

- Region 18 ESC has informed applicants of the required information. Admission requirements, program completion requirements, the effects of supply and demand, and the performance of the EPP over time for the past five years were found on the



program's website. The program met this requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.1(c)(1-3)]

- Region 18 ESC has informed applicants and candidates about the required information regarding criminal history. A link to TEA's criminal history check website was found on the program's website. While this is allowable, it is important to make sure candidates and applicants are aware that they can submit a preliminary criminal history evaluation if they are concerned about a prior offense. TEA recommends adding additional information about the preliminary criminal history background check process to its website and candidate handbook. The program met this requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.1(d)]
- A total of ten (10) superintendent candidate files were reviewed for evidence that the program is meeting requirements for admission. Nine (9) out of ten (10) candidate records include evidence that shows each candidate met the required institution of higher education (IHE) degree requirement and held a master's degree at the time of admission. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(1-2); 19 TAC §242.5]
- Eight (8) out of ten (10) candidate records provide evidence that each candidate met the minimum GPA requirement for admission. The superintendent candidate GPA range was 3.0 - 4.0. The program requirement for superintendent admission is 3.0. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(3)(A)]
- Nine (9) out of ten (10) files reviewed met the minimum certification and degree requirements prior to admission. Candidate transcripts and service records served as evidence of compliance. Those files also contained evidence of the master's degree and a valid principal certificate held as required. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(5)]
- Applicants must demonstrate basic skills prior to admission. Nine (9) out of ten (10) superintendent candidates met the requirement with an official transcript noting the degree conferred. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(6)]
- All applicants must demonstrate proficiency in English language skills prior to admission. One way to meet this requirement is by obtaining a degree from an accredited IHE within the United States. Nine (9) out of ten (10) superintendent candidates met the requirement with an official transcript noting the degree conferred. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(7)]
- An applicant for admission must be screened to determine appropriateness for the certification sought. Each applicant was interviewed and had to provide at least two professional recommendations as part of the screening process. The program met the requirement. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8); 19 TAC §241.5; 19 TAC §242.5]
- All files reviewed contained a completed application. The program met the requirement. [19 TAC §227.10(a)(8)]
- All applicants are required to be formally admitted. Seven (7) out of ten (10) candidate records contain formal admission information. The effective date of formal admission was found in the letters for those files reviewed. TEA could not verify if candidates were admitted prior to beginning coursework and training as required due to missing



coursework records. The program did not meet the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §227.17, §227.17(d),§227.17(f), and §227.15]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps)

- **19 TAC §227.17 Formal Admission & No Coursework or Training Prior to Admission**

Action: Update the program's formal admission process to include verifying that all formal admission letters are kept in each candidate's file for at least 5 years from the candidate's completion in the program.

Recommendations

- TEA recommends adding additional information about the preliminary criminal history background check process to its website and candidate handbook.

Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC is not in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 227 - Admission Criteria.

COMPONENT III: CURRICULUM – 19 TAC §228.30

Findings

- TEA did not review curriculum documents but relied on self-reported information contained within the Status Report to determine compliance.
- Region 18 ESC reported that the curriculum is based on educator standards within the coursework identified in the Status Report. [19 TAC §228.30(a)]
- Region 18 ESC did not identify that the superintendent curriculum is research-based. The program did not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §228.30(b)]
- The required subject matter has been included in the curriculum for candidates seeking initial certification in the Superintendent class. The Educators' Code of Ethics, mental health, substance abuse, youth suicide, the skills educators are required to possess and the responsibilities they are required to accept are taught in Module 1. The high expectations for students in this state, the importance of building strong classroom management skills, the framework in this state for teacher and principal evaluations, appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students, and instruction in digital learning, including a digital literacy evaluation followed by a prescribed digital learning curriculum, are also taught in Module 1. [19 TAC §228.30(c); 19 TAC §228.30(c)(1-8)(A-C); 19 TAC §228.30(d)(2)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps)

- **19 TAC §228.30(b) Research-based Curriculum**

Action: Provide evidence of how scientifically-based research was used to update the Superintendent program curriculum.

Recommendations

- None



Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC is not in compliance with 19 TAC §228.30-Curriculum.

COMPONENT IV: PROGRAM DELIVERY AND ONGOING SUPPORT – 19 TAC §228.35

Findings

- TEA cannot verify if Region 18 ESC provides candidates with adequate preparation and training that is sustained, rigorous, and interactive due to missing coursework records. The program did not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(1-2)]
- TEA cannot verify if Region 18 ESC provided the required coursework for seven (7) superintendent candidates who reached the point of standard certification due to missing coursework records. The program did not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(3)]
- Region 18 ESC has procedures for allowing relevant military experiences and procedures for allowing prior experience, education, or training. The procedures were found on the program's website. The program met this requirement. [19 TAC §228.35(a)(5)(A-B)]
- TEA cannot verify if Region 18 ESC provided a minimum of 200 clock-hours of coursework and/or training that is directly aligned to the educator standards for the Superintendent class. The program did not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §228.35(c)]
- Eight (8) out of ten (10) superintendent candidates completed a practicum that exceeded the 160 clock-hour requirements. Programs are required to determine a candidate's level of proficiency in the educator standards during the practicum. With the candidate files submitted, TEA cannot identify proficiency levels observed during the practicum. While the program met the practicum duration requirement, the program did not meet the candidate proficiency requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) & (j)(2)]
- Field supervisors and campus site supervisors provided recommendations to the program regarding candidate success in the practicum. This was verified with signatures on the practicum activity log. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(D)]
- All candidates placed in a practicum were assigned to a site supervisor. Ten (10) superintendent candidate records were reviewed to verify this requirement. The program met this requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(f)]
- Of the ten (10) site supervisors, (9) candidate records provided evidence of the required credentials held. The program met this requirement. [19 TAC §228.2(12); 19 TAC §228.2(24); 19 TAC §228.2(31); 19 TAC §228.35(f)]
- TEA cannot verify if site supervisor training occurred within three weeks of assignment to the candidate and the training materials used for the site supervisor training. After speaking with program staff, it was found that the program does not have site supervisor training materials. The program is currently working on creating the required training materials for site supervisors. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC § 228.2(12); 19 TAC §228.2(24); 19 TAC §228.2(31); 19 TAC §228.35(f)]
- All candidate files reviewed that reached the point of a practicum were assigned to a field supervisor. The program met this requirement. [19 TAC §228.35(g); 19 TAC §228.35(h)]



- The field supervisor held the required credentials appropriate for the candidates supervised. Larry T. Lee is the field supervisor for all superintendent candidates with Region 18 ESC. His credentials were verified through TEA's Certificate Lookup portal. The program met the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.2(16)]
- Larry T. Lee was trained within three weeks of assignment to the assigned candidate. A certificate of training completion was used as evidence of compliance. The program met this requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g) & (h)]
- Field supervisors are required to make the first contact within the first quarter of the assignment for non-teacher candidates. Initial contact dates are evident for nine (9) out of ten (10) candidate records. Field supervisors are required to provide written feedback as required. This was verified with signatures on the feedback documents. Field supervisors are also required to identify educational practices that are observed during a candidate's practicum observations. TEA cannot verify if educational practices are observed with the documents provided. The field supervisor collaborated with the required individuals as found in training documents but TEA cannot confirm if the field supervisor held pre-conferences for seven (7) out of ten (10) candidates and post-conferences for all ten (10) candidates. The program did not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.35(g) & (h)]
- Formal observations conducted by the field supervisor must meet the requirements for duration, frequency, and format. TEA cannot verify observation duration, frequency, and format for five (5) out of ten (10) candidates. The program was 50% compliant. The program does not meet the requirement as prescribed. 19 TAC §228.35(g)(1-8) & (h)(1-3)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps)

- **19 TAC §228.35(a)(1-2) Coursework & Training: Adequate Preparation & Quality of Coursework; 19 TAC §228.35(a)(3) Coursework & Training: Coursework Completion; 19 TAC §228.35(c) Coursework Hours: Required Hours-Non- Teacher Action:** Update the program's process of tracking the required coursework and verifying that all coursework records are kept in each candidate's file for at least 5 years from the candidate's completion in the program.
- **19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) & (j)(2) Skills Implementation: Candidate Proficiency in Practicum Action:** Update the program's process of identifying a candidate's level of proficiency in the educator standards during the practicum observations.
- **19 TAC §228.35(f) Campus Supervision: Training Mentors, Cooperating Teachers, and Site Supervisors – site supervisor training materials & training Action:** Update the program's site supervisor training materials, the process of documenting the training, and how the program will ensure that the training occurs in the required timeframe.
- **19 TAC §228.35(g), §228.35(h), & §228.35(j)(2)(C) Field Supervision: Educational Practices Observed & Field Supervision: Pre- and Post-Conferences Action:** Update the program's process to document educational practices observed during each candidate's practicum observation. Also, update the program's process of documenting when the required pre and post conferences are held.



- **19 TAC §228.35(h) & §228.35(j)(2)(C) Field Supervision: Practicum-Formal Observation Duration, Field Supervision: Practicum-Observation Format, & Field Supervision: Practicum-Observation Number & Frequency**
Action: Update the program's process to document the duration, format, and frequency of practicum observations.

Recommendations

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC is not in Compliance with 19 TAC §228.35 – Program Delivery and On-Going Support.

COMPONENT V: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES AND EPP – 19 TAC §228.40

Findings

- Region 18 ESC does not have established benchmarks to measure candidate progress. Though the program makes notes throughout a candidate's enrollment, Region 18 ESC does not have program benchmarks for each candidate. The program does not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §228.40(a)]
- Region 18 ESC has structured assessments to measure candidate progress. The program uses a research project/presentation that is aligned to the superintendent educator standards. The project measures candidate proficiency and is a part of the candidate's practicum experience. The program meets the requirement. [19 TAC §228.40(a)]
- All educator preparation programs are required to have processes in place to ensure that candidates are prepared to be successful on their certification exams. For the standard certified candidates, four (4) out of seven (7) candidate records include test preparation evidence. TEA could not confirm how the program determines test readiness for the additional candidates. Though TEA was able to confirm that Region 18 ESC did not provide test approval until after each candidate was formally admitted, the program did not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §228.40(b); 19 TAC §228.40(d)]
- Region 18 ESC is in the process of creating a formal evaluation tool to determine the design and delivery of the program. In the past, the program has used verbal comments to evaluate the program. Region 18 ESC does not meet the requirement as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.40(e)]
- All educator preparation programs are required to retain documents that provide evidence of a candidate's eligibility for admission to the program and evidence of completion of all program requirements for a period of five years after a candidate completes, withdraws from, or is discharged or released from the program. Due to missing records mentioned in previous components, the program does not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §228.40(f)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps)



- **19 TAC §228.40(a) Benchmarks**
Action: Create established benchmarks to measure candidate progress for each candidate. The benchmark document should track candidate progress from admission to standard certification (or withdrawal or discharge).
- **19 TAC §228.40(b); 19 TAC §228.40(d) Test Preparation**
Action: Update the program's process of ensuring candidates are adequately prepared to pass the appropriate content pedagogy exams. Also, update the program's process of documenting test preparation provided to candidates.
- **19 TAC §228.40(e) Program Evaluation**
Action: Update the process of gathering information to evaluate the program's effectiveness.
- **19 TAC §228.40(f) Records Retention**
Action: Update the program's record retention process to keep candidate records for a period of five years after a candidate's completion, withdrawal, discharge, or release from the program.

Recommendations

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC is not in compliance with 19 TAC §228.40 – Assessment and Evaluation of Candidates for Certification and Program Improvement.

COMPONENT VI: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT - 19 TAC §228.50

Findings

19 TAC §228.50 requires that during the period of preparation, the educator preparation program shall ensure that the individuals preparing candidates and the candidates themselves understand and adhere to Chapter 247 of this title (relating to Educators' Code of Ethics).

- Each candidate is required to adhere to the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics. Signed candidate statements are used as evidence of understanding, reading, and abiding by the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics. The signed candidate statements are not found for all ten (10) candidates. The program did not meet this requirement.
- All associated staff and field supervisors signed a Texas Educator's Code of Ethics. Signed staff statements were found and used as evidence of compliance.

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps)

- **19 TAC §228.50 Ethical Candidates**
Action: Update the program's process that will be used to document the candidate adhering to the Texas Educator's Code of Ethics.

Recommendations

- None



Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC is not in compliance with 19 TAC §228.50 - Professional Conduct.

COMPONENT VII: COMPLAINTS PROCESS – 19 TAC §228.70

Findings

- Per 19 TAC §228.70(b), the program's complaints process is on file at TEA. The complaint policy is posted on the program's website and posted on-site. The program provides the complaint policy in writing upon request. Region 18 ESC meets the requirements as prescribed. [19 TAC §228.70(b)(1-4)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed

- None

Recommendations

- TEA recommends providing additional information about the program's complaint process on the complaint website.

Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC is in compliance with 19 TAC §228.70 – Complaints Process.

COMPONENT VIII: CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES - 19 TAC Chapters 228 and 230

Findings

- Nine (9) out of ten (10) candidate records include evidence that at a minimum, each candidate held a master's degree, for standard certification. The program met this requirement. [19 TAC §241.60; 19 TAC §241.20; 19 TAC §239.20; 19 TAC §239.93]
- Superintendent candidates are required to hold a valid principal certificate or the required managerial experience when recommended for standard certification. All ten (10) candidates held a valid principal certificate. The program met this requirement. [19 TAC §242.20]
- All educator preparation programs are required to verify a candidate's completion of requirements before standard certification can occur. In the past, candidate progress was tracked using Canvas. When Region 18 ESC did not renew the Canvas account, the program lost candidate information, including when requirements were completed. For the seven standard certified candidate records reviewed, TEA was able to verify program completion for five of those candidates. The program did not meet this requirement. [19 TAC §241.20(5), §241.60(5), §242.20(2), §239.20(1), §239.60(1), §239.84(1), & §239.93(1)]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed (see Next Steps)

- **19 TAC §241.20(5), §241.60(5), §242.20(2), §239.20(1), §239.60(1), §239.84(1), & §239.93(1) Non-Teacher Certification: Complete an Approved Program**



Action: Update the program’s process of verifying program completion before standard certification occurs.

Recommendations

- None

Based on the evidence presented, the Region 18 ESC is not in compliance with 19 TAC Chapters 228 and 230 – Certification Procedures.

COMPONENT IX: INTEGRITY OF DATA REPORTED - 19 TAC Chapter 229

Findings

- Region 18 ESC has submitted ASEP reports within the timeline required by TEA. 19 TAC §229.3(e); 19 TAC §229.3(f)(1) and Associated Graphic]

Compliance Issues to be Addressed

- None

Recommendations

- None

Based on the evidence presented, Region 18 ESC is in compliance with 19 TAC Chapter 229 – Integrity of Data Reported.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADVISEMENT

- For Teacher preparation programs, the Pre-Admission Content Test (PACT) changed effective January 27, 2020. Ensure curriculum in all teacher certificate areas has been updated to meet requirements for content pedagogy instruction and test preparation. Passing scores on TExES exams cannot be used to meet EPP admission requirements after 1/27/2020 but may be used for certification purposes until the expiration date of the related certificate. The new PACT, or “TX PACT”, is a content-pure assessment that cannot be used for certification purposes.
- Develop a plan to update EPP benchmarks and test readiness requirements for Teacher programs to address changes in PACT, if necessary.
- Application A has changed – plan to review requirements to prepare for adding new certificate areas.
- Develop and implement more performance assessments in all programs. Evidence of performance assessments is a requirement for adding new certificates using the new Application A.
- Review all certificate areas that the EPP no longer plans to support and request, in writing, for TEA to remove them from inventory.



- The transition from 291 Core EC-6 with STR to 391 Core EC-6 is beginning. December 2021 is the last date a candidate can test under the 291 certificate and the last date to standard certify those candidates will be December 2022. You will want to begin reminding candidates just as you were doing for the 291 without STR to ensure that they meet all requirements and can be standard certified under that certificate. As you formally admit new EC-6 candidates, you will want to begin admitting as 391 candidates.
- Intern and Probationary certificate deactivation timelines and requirements have been updated in TAC. Changes include new timelines for requesting deactivations and information that must be provided to stakeholders in advance of internship start dates. Field supervisors will need to verify candidate placement information at the beginning of the assignment.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS AII EPPS

- To ensure continuity in record keeping and other related processes, consider creating a procedure manual documenting EPP processes.
- Align the verbiage of the program to the verbiage of Texas Administrative Code (TAC) (ex. Field supervisor, cooperating teacher, mentor, candidate, etc.);
- Continue to follow the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and the State Board of Education (SBOE) meetings and/or review the minutes to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to participate in training and webinars provided by the Division of Educator Preparation to ensure that the program staff is knowledgeable about current requirements and changes in the Texas Administrative Code;
- Continue to maintain communication with the program specialist assigned to the program.
- Ensure that TEA staff has the most current contact information by sending updates to the assigned program specialist.

SUMMARY

Next Steps were created collaboratively with Region 18 ESC staff.



“I have reviewed the EPP Report and agree that all required corrections will be made on or before **April 30, 2021.”**

Signature of Legal Authority

Date

Printed Name of Legal Authority

Date